

**EPA Performance Appraisal and Recognition System (PARS)**  
**Year-End Performance Summary**  
**Joe Vranka**  
**Supervisory Environmental Engineer GS-0819-14**  
**R8 Office of Ecosystems Protection and Remediation**  
**Superfund Remedial Program, Unit D, Helena, Montana**  
**October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018**

**Critical Element 1: Organizational and individual goals, objectives, and measures are achieved consistent with the EPA Strategic Plan and Regional/Divisional operating plans.**

- Worked with fiscal staff and project managers to establish and update project / site schedules and identify funding needs.
- Ensured that revised data were entered into SEMS, the national tracking database for Superfund.
- Participated in Region 8 and Headquarters meetings and conference calls to establish, discuss, and monitor remedial goals and targets for FY2018 based upon input from staff.
- Participated in periodic EPR/ECEJ Superfund coordination meetings/teleconferences to promote effective communication and coordination between program and enforcement management and staff.
- Discussed targets with staff as periodic reminders of commitments and goals.
- Participated in monthly Superfund management coordination meetings with MDEQ to discuss progress, funding, issues, and concerns at federal Superfund sites in Montana.
- Participated in periodic Regional Leadership Team meetings via teleconference line.

**Critical Element 2: Supervisors/managers effectively lead and invest in employees to enhance their performance development and job satisfaction in accomplishing EPA's goals and objectives.**

- Held monthly staff meetings to provide information regarding local, regional, and national discussions and issues, budget updates, and other administrative updates (i.e., staffing, recruitment, required training, etc.), and to solicit input and/or discussion from/with staff.
- Discussed work load, work/site assignments, issues and concerns with individual staff and encouraged long-term planning for professional development.
- Adjusted work assignments as necessary to redistribute work load across available staff and accommodate new site work and separations.
- Managed travel and training budgets and tried to provide training and conference opportunities to all staff.
- Discussed opportunities with staff for professional development and personal growth.
- Worked with staff to ensure that EPA mandatory training was completed on time.
- Participated in biweekly Regional Leadership Team meetings to communicate Superfund Program issues and understand regional issues and priorities.
- Coordinated with Region 8 Superfund Remedial Program managers to address shifting workload created by new sites and emerging priorities.
- Participated in RAF 101 Training November 9, 2017, and Core Quality Assurance Training on December 7, 2017 and February 15, 2018.
- Attended SCRIBE database training course March 29, 2018.
- OSHA Annual 8-hour health and safety refresher training course May 3, 2018.
- Traveled to Denver July 31, 2018 to participate in the Superfund Planning Process briefing for the Assistant Regional Administrator and Deputy Assistant Regional Administrator for Ecosystems Protection and Remediation.
- Attended multiple HRMD LER Management Training Series courses on line.

**Critical Element 3: Materials, money, information, and systems are effectively aligned and managed to produce high quality results which accomplish strategic goals and organizational objectives.**

- Participated in weekly meetings with the Ecosystems Protection and Remediation Leadership Team.
- Participated in weekly Superfund Remedial Program Managers meetings.
- Participated in monthly Superfund budget meetings/conference calls with Region 8 Superfund program and fiscal management.
- Participated in monthly Region 8 / OSRTI (HQ) conference calls to discuss issues and funding.
- Worked with Ecosystems Protection and Remediation fiscal staff to establish and track annual budgets for site work, travel, training and other operational needs.
- Met periodically with individual staff members to identify funding needs and establish priorities for work.
- Participated in periodic meetings with MDEQ on the multi-site cooperative agreements to monitor expenditures and budget and anticipate any additional funding needs.
- Reviewed MDEQ quarterly reports for core, multi-site management assistance, and multi-site technical assistance cooperative agreements.
- Met every two weeks with the RACS contractor, Camp Dresser & McKee / CDM Smith, to discuss the status of work assignments for the Montana Office.
- Met every two weeks with the RACS contractor, Pacific Western Technologies, Inc. (PWT), to discuss the status of work assignments for the Montana Office.
- Attended the EPA Region 8 States Superfund Managers meeting June 13-14, 2017 in Butte, Montana.
- Acted as the FIT (Field Activities Implementation Team) representative for the quality assurance field activities procedure (QAFAP) for the Superfund Remedial Program Montana Superfund Unit D.

**Critical Element 4: Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Employment Opportunity.**

- Participated in training and meetings..

**Non-Critical Element: Environmental Management System**

- Worked with administrative/support staff to monitor the implementation of the Montana Office Environmental Management System.
- Reviewed and approved periodic updates and reports prepared by administrative staff on implementation of the Montana Office Environmental Management System.

**Non-Critical Element: Records Management -- Responsible for complying with the requirements to create and maintain records that are necessary to document official activities and action, in accordance with EPA recordkeeping requirements.**

- Provided training and information at monthly staff meetings on records management issues using presentations from attorneys and Records Center staff.
- Worked with Enforcement staff managing the Records Center contract to identify issues related to training staff, maintaining records, new records management software, and coordination with Region 8 records management contractors, staff and management in Denver.
- Worked with the Montana Office Records Center manager on issues related to processing documents and entry into SDMS/SEMS.
- Coordinated with the Montana Office Records Center manager on funding needs for the records center contract.

## **Montana Superfund Sites**

### **SCAP Accomplishments**

- RI/FS Start for Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area site, West Side Soils OU13, **08/21/2018**
- RI/FS Start for ACM Smelter and Refinery site, OU2, **05/03/2018**
- RD Complete, East Helena site, OU2 BNSF Right-of-Way, **05/01/2018**
- RD Complete, Milltown Reservoir Sediments/Clark Fork River site, Clark Fork River OU3, Reach A Phases 15 & 16, **07/17/2018**
- RA Start, East Helena site, OU2 BNSF Right-of-Way, **08/17/2018**
- RA Complete, East Helena site, OU2 American Chemet, **09/24/2018**
- RA Complete, Milltown Reservoir Sediments/Clark Fork River site, Clark Fork River OU3, East Side Road Pastures, **09/24/2018**
- Basin Mining Area Five-Year Review, **09/22/2018**
- Flat Creek IMM Five-Year Review, **09/27/2018**
- Moutat Industries Five-Year Review, **07/06/2018**

### **Anaconda Aluminum (Columbia Falls Aluminum Company)**

- The Columbia Falls Aluminum Company continued work on the remedial investigation and feasibility study under a November 2015 administrative order on consent.

### **ACM Smelter and Refinery**

- Atlantic Richfield completed its RI/FS and risk assessment work for OU1, Black Eagle Community Soils, under an Administrative Order on Consent.
- Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company completed its RI/FS and risk assessment work along the railroad right-of-way through OU1 under a Unilateral Administrative Order.
- Conducted a ROD improvement process milestone meeting with MDEQ and OSRTI for the ACM Smelter and Refinery Site Proposed Plan on May 2, 2018.
- Signed an Administrative Order on Consent with the Atlantic Richfield Company May 3, 2018 to perform the Operable Unit 2 (OU2) RI/FS.

### **Anaconda Smelter**

- With significant support and direct participation from the Regional Administrator in consent decree negotiations, reached a Conceptual Settlement Framework July 28, 2018 with the State of Montana, Anaconda-Deer Lodge County, and the Atlantic Richfield Company for a sitewide consent decree at Anaconda.
- Sampled public schools and the head start school in response to concerns from the community
- Worked with ATSDR to collect [voluntary] blood and urine samples from Anaconda to evaluate exposures in response to concerns from the community. EPA and ATSDR expect the number of residents requesting the sampling to total between 400 and 600.
- EPA collected garden produce from residents to sample for the presence of lead and arsenic in response to community concerns.
- The Atlantic Richfield Company continued to sample and clean up approximately 500 residential properties per year pursuant to the Community Soils OU Record of Decision, as amended.
- The Atlantic Richfield Company continued its clean up and reclamation work on Smelter Hill, and management of the Opportunity Ponds cap, stormwater controls, and passive ground water treatment system.
- The Atlantic Richfield Company completed the remaining cleanup work along Warm Springs Creek.

**Barker Hughesville Mining Area**

- Planned and conducted a ROD improvement process milestone meeting on January 30, 2018 for the Barker Hughesville Mining District draft feasibility study with MDEQ and OSRTI.
- Worked with the RPM on PRP implementation of additional work at the Block P Mine complex to address contaminated seeps into the creek.

**Basin Mining Area**

- The site is still waiting for funding for remedial action at the Crystal (OU5) and Bullion (OU6) Mines (National Risk-Based Prioritization Panel presentation November 2015).
- Continued work on institutional controls for the town of Basin.
- Continued to work with the RPM and MDEQ on a Superfund State Contract for remedial action.
- Completed a Five-Year Review for the site on September 22, 2018.

**Burlington Northern Livingston Shop Complex (Proposed)**

- Withdrawn from the proposed Superfund National Priorities List September 9, 2017.

**Burlington Northern Somers Tie Treating Plant (non-NPL)**

- Worked with the RPM, Montana DEQ, and the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company on the update of the conceptual model and discussion of a focused feasibility study to evaluate the need for changes to the Record of Decision.
- BNSF is evaluating the potential use of a biosparge process to enhance biodegradation of remaining contaminants in the subsurface.

**Carpenter Snow Creek Mining Area**

- Neihart residential soils OU1 is still waiting for funding for remedial action (National Risk-Based Prioritization Panel presentation November 2015).
- Worked with the RPM on continued implementation of the interim contaminated soil management program (Property Owner Soil Management or "POSM") to assist homeowners with managing potentially contaminated soil from improvement projects until remediation can be conducted.
- Planned and conducted a ROD improvement process milestone meeting on January 30, 2018 for the Carpenter Snow Creek OU2 draft feasibility study with MDEQ and OSRTI.
- Worked with the RPM and potentially responsible parties for treatability work in the watershed.

**Clark Fork River**

- Worked with the RPM for the Clark Fork River OU, Milltown Reservoir Sediments/Clark Fork River Superfund site on the state-lead remedial design and remedial action pursuant to the consent decree and Superfund Memorandum of Agreement.
- Reviewed Montana DEQ quarterly reports for the Clark Fork River OU remedial design and remedial action.
- Worked with the RPM to provide a remedial design completion for Reach A Phases 15 & 16 (August 16, 2018).
- Worked with the RPM to provide a remedial action completion for Reach A East Side Road Pastures (September 24, 2018).

### **East Helena Smelter**

- Worked with project staff, the Montana Environmental Trust Group, Montana DEQ and NRDP on issues related to the RCRA corrective action process at East Helena, and the ongoing process to characterize and clean up the former smelter facility.
- RPM achieved Human Exposures Under Control (HEUC) and Ground Water Migration Under Control (GWMUC) for the RCRA cleanup this year.
- Worked with the RPM to complete OU2 remedial design May 1, 2018 for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company right-of-way and implement a Corrective Action Management Unit designation for the slag pile to change the disposal location for contaminated soils from the east fields to the slag pile.
- Completed the OU2 American Chemet remedial action on September 24, 2018.
- East Helena Public School District opened a new elementary school this year on property formerly owned by ASARCO after working with the RPM, Montana Environmental Trust Group, Montana DEQ, and Montana DOJ Natural Resource Damage Program on cleanup and redevelopment of property transferred to the school district.

### **Flat Creek IMM**

- Worked with the RPM to monitor the Montana DEQ and USFS cleanup work for streamside tailings removal along Flat Creek.
- Worked with the RPM and Mineral County on the implementation of Institutional Controls for the site.
- Completed a five-year review for the site on September 27, 2018.

### **Idaho Pole**

- Worked with the RPM and Montana DEQ to begin the process of partial deletion of the site (surface/soil) from the National Priorities List.

### **Libby Asbestos**

- NA

### **Libby Ground Water**

- NA

### **Lockwood Solvents**

- Worked with the RPM and EPA contractor, PWT, to complete and operate a pilot scale soil vapor extraction system for Operable Unit 1, the Beall facility.
- Worked with the Remedial Project Manager and ECEJ on access issues and coordination with the property lessee and property owner to remove and replace the steam bay in conjunction with the pilot scale soil vapor extraction system.
- Worked with the RPM to oversee ongoing remedial action by Soco West, the potentially responsible party OU2, for contaminated ground water.

### **Milltown Reservoir Sediments**

- Worked with the Remedial Project Manager on monitoring issues, operations and maintenance, and restoration revegetation efforts.
- Worked with the RPM, site attorney, Montana DEQ, Montana DOJ/NRDP, Montana DoT, U.S. DoJ, and the Atlantic Richfield Company to work through informal dispute resolution over additional work directed by EPA in response to the Montana Department of Transportation initiation of a project to replace the Interstate 90 bridges over the Blackfoot River at Milltown.

### **Montana Pole**

- Worked with the RPM and Montana DEQ on discussions with Butte-Silver Bow County about future land use, final site configuration, and offload of the land treatment units.
- Worked with the RPM and Montana DEQ on the proposal for an Explanation of Significant Differences to provide for capping of soils where the cleanup standard for dioxin was not met.
- Planned and conducted a ROD improvement process milestone meeting on April 12, 2018 for the Montana DEQ draft Explanation of Significant Differences, with Montana DEQ and OSRTI.
- Reviewed Montana DEQ quarterly reports for Montana Pole and assisted with the preparation of EPA quarterly reports to Montana DEQ and annual invoices under the Consent Decree and Superfund Memorandum of Agreement.

### **Mouat Industries**

- Worked with the Remedial Project Manager on strategies and planning for closing out and deleting the site from the Superfund National Priorities List.
- Completed a five-year review for the site on July 6, 2018.

### **Silver Bow Creek / Butte Area**

- With significant support and direct participation from the Regional Administrator in consent decree negotiations, reached an Agreement In Principle January 26, 2018 with the State of Montana, Butte-Silver Bow County, and the Atlantic Richfield Company for a sitewide consent decree at Anaconda the Butte Priority Soils OU.
- Coordinated with program and enforcement staff on implementation of the Unilateral Administrative Order for Partial Implementation of RD/RA at the Butte Priority Soils OU.
- Participated in technical meetings for Consent Decree negotiations and development of a Technical Impracticability Evaluation for a potential waiver of the state total recoverable metals standards for some of the contaminants of concern in Silver Bow Creek.
- Multiple meetings with responsible parties and the state to work through issues on the surface water characterization, ground water characterization, and other technical issues.
- Worked with the Remedial Project Manager for the Butte Mine Flooding Operable Unit to oversee the Atlantic Richfield Company and Montana Resources adequacy review for the Horseshoe Bend Water Treatment Plant.
- Continued to work with the RPM, Montana DEQ, USFWS, Montana FWP, Montana Resources, Inc., and the Atlantic Richfield Company on improved migratory waterfowl hazing measures to respond to the deaths of between 3,000 and 4,000 snow geese on the Berkeley Pit November 28, 2016.
- Worked with the Remedial Project Manager for the Rocker Operable Unit to develop an updated conceptual model for ground water and address performance and compliance monitoring issues.
- Worked with the Remedial Project Manager for the Warm Springs Ponds Operable Unit to oversee Atlantic Richfield Company implementation of lime addition optimization / reduction studies for water treatment.
- Worked with the RPM for Warm Springs Ponds OU and the site attorney, ORC, and OGC to respond to develop a Biological Assessment for the Warm Springs Ponds in response to an Endangered Species Act lawsuit from the Alliance for the Wild Rockies regarding designation of critical habitat for bull trout in 2010 on the Clark Fork River downstream of the Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area site.

- Reviewed Montana DEQ quarterly reports for the Streamside Tailings Operable Unit remedial design and remedial action.
- Assisted with the preparation of EPA quarterly reports to Montana DEQ and annual invoices pursuant to the Consent Decree.
- Worked with Headquarters and Region 8 management and community involvement staff on interactions with the community, response to particular community members, and management of community correspondence to EPA Headquarters and Region 8 senior leadership.
- Worked with the RPM to get a work assignment and accomplish a remedial investigation and feasibility study start for the West Side Soils Operable Unit 13 on August 21, 2018.

#### **Smurfit-Stone Mill**

- M2Green, West Rock, and International Paper continued the remedial investigation and feasibility study and risk assessment processes under a November 2015 Administrative Order on Consent.
- Participated in community and stakeholder meetings and natural resource trustee coordination meetings to discuss site work plans with Missoula County, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe, Frenchtown community, West Valley Community Council, Montana DEQ, Montana DOJ/NRDP, Clark Fork River Coalition, and others.
- Worked with Missoula County, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Region 8 Emergency Response Program to respond to significant flooding on the Clark Fork River adjacent to the site in May 2018.

#### **Upper Tenmile Creek Mining Area**

- The site is still waiting for remedial action funding for the Minnehaha group of mines, passive treatment system at the National Extension adit, and haul of waste material from Landmark residential properties to the Luttrell Repository (National Risk-Based Prioritization Panel presentation November 2015).
- Worked with the Remedial Project Manager to conduct another Five-Year Review for the Upper Tenmile site, due to be signed in FY2019.
- Worked with Montana DEQ on the Basin Lease Agreement Cooperative Agreement and cost share credit approval and a new Superfund State Contract for remedial action.